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AGRICULTURAL.

☞ *"Agriculture is the chief foundation of a nation's power, as it not only furnishes man with food and clothing, but also with materials for the mechanic arts, and commerce."*

From the Horticulturist.

The Beautiful in Ground.

We may have readers who think themselves not devoid of some taste for nature, but who have never thought of looking for beauty in the mere surface of the earth—whether in a natural landscape, or in ornamental grounds. Their idea of beauty is, for the most part, attached to the foliage and verdure, the streams of water, the high hills and the valleys, that make up landscape. A meadow is to them but a meadow, and a ploughed field is but the same thing in a rough state. And, yet, there is a great and enduring interest, to a refined and artistic eye, in the mere surface of the ground. There is a sense of pleasure awakened by pleasing lines into which yonder sloping bank of turf steals away from the eye and a sense of ugliness and harshness, by the raw and broken outline of the abandoned quarry on the hill-side, which hardly any can be so obtuse as not to see and feel. Yet the finer gradations are nearly overlooked, and the charm of beautiful surface in a lawn is seldom or ever considered, in selecting a new site or improving an old one.

We believe artists and men of taste have agreed that all forms of acknowleged beauty are composed of *curved lines*; and we may add to this that the more gentle and gradual the curves or rather the father they are removed from those hard and forcible lines which denote violence the more beautiful are they. The principle applies as well to the surface of the earth, as to other objects. The most beautiful shape in ground is that where one undulation melts gradually and insensibility into another. Every one who has observed scenery where the foregrounds were remarkable for beauty, must have been struck by this prevalence of curved lines; and every landscape gardener well knows, that no grassy surface is so captivating to the eye, as one where these gentle swells and undulations rise and melt away gradually into one another. Some poet happy in his fancy, has called such bits of grassy slopes and swells, "earth's smiles;" and when the effect of the beauty and form of outline is heightened by the pleasing gradation of light and shade, caused by the sun's light variously reflected by such undulation of lawn, the simile seems strikingly appropriate. With every change of position the outlines vary, and the lights and shades vary with them, so that the eye is doubly pleased by the beauty of form and chiaro-scuro, in a lawn with gracefully undulating surface.

A flat or *level* surface is considered beautiful by many persons, though it has no beauty in itself. It is in fact, chiefly valued because it evinces art. Though there is no positive beauty in a straight or level line, it is often interesting, of *power*, and we feel as much awed by the boundless prairie, or desert, as by the lofty snow-capped hill. On a smaller scale, a level surface is sometimes agreeable in the midst of a rude and wild country by way of contrast, as a small, level garden in the Alps will sometimes attract one astonishingly, that would be passed by, unnoticed, in the midst of a flat and cultivated country.

Hence, as there are a thousand men who value power, where there is one who can feel beauty, we see all ignorant persons, who set about embellishing their pleasure-grounds, or even the site for a home, immediately commence *levelling* the surface. Once brought to this level, improvement can go no further, according to their views, since to subjugate or level, is the whole aim of man's ambition. Once levelled, you may give to grounds, or even to a whole landscape, according to their theory, as much beauty as you like. It is only a question of expense.

This is a fearful fallacy, however; fearful oftentimes to both the eye and the purse. If a dead level were the thing needful to constitute beauty of surface—then all Holland would be the Arcadia of Landscape Painters, and while CLAUDE, condemned to tame Italy, would have painted the interior of inns, and groups of boors drinking, (vide the Dutch School of Art,) TENIERS, living in the dead level of his beautiful nature, would have bequeathed to the world pictures of his native land, full of loveliness of meadows smooth as a carpet, or enlivened only by pollard willows and stagnant canals. It is not the less fearful to see, as we have often seen in this country, where new places are continually made, a finely varied outline of ground utterly spoiled by being graded for the mansion and its surrounding lawn, at an expense which would have curved all the walks, and filled the grounds with the finest trees and shrubs, if their surface had been left nearly or quite as nature formed it. Not much better, or even far worse, is the foolish fancy many persons have of *terracing* every piece of sloping ground—as a mere matter of ornament, where no terrace is needed. It may be pretty safely said, that a terrace is always ugly, unless it is on a large scale, and is treated with dignity, so as to become part of the building itself, or more properly be supposed to belong to it than to the grounds—like the fine, architectural terraces which surround the old English mansions. But little gardens thrown up into terraces, are devoid of all beauty whatever—though they may often be rendered more useful or available in this way.

The surface of the ground is rarely *ugly* in a state of nature—because all nature leans to the beautiful, and the constant action of the elements goes continually to soften and wear away the harshness and violence of surface. What cannot be softened, is hidden and rounded by means of foliage, trees and shrubs, and creeping vines, and so the tendency to the curve is always greater and greater. But man often forms ugly surfaces of ground, by breaking up all natural curves, without recognizing their expression, by distributing lumps of earth here and there, by grading levels in the midst of undulations, and raising mounds on perfectly smooth surfaces; in short, by regarding only the little he wishes to do in his folly, and not studying the larger part that nature has already done in her wisdom. As a common, though accidental illustration of this, we may notice that the mere routine of tillage on a farm, has a tendency to destroy natural beauty of surface, by ridging up the soil at the outside of the field, and thus breaking up that continuous flow of line which delights the eye.

Our object in these remarks, is simply to ask our readers to think in the beginning, before they even commence any improvements on the surface of ground which they wish to embellish—to think in what natural beauty really consists, and whether in grading, they are not wasting money, and losing that which they are seeking. It will be better still, if they will consider the matter seriously, when they are about buying a place, since we have said in our last number, no money is expended with so little to show for it, and so little satisfaction, as that spent in changing the original surface of the ground.

Practically—the rules we would deduce are the following: To select always, if possible, a surface varied by gentle curves and undulations. If something of this character already exists, it may often be greatly heightened or improved at little cost. Very often, too, a nearly level surface may, by a very trifling addition—only adding a few inches in certain points—be raised to a character of positive beauty—by simply following the hints given by nature.

When a surface is quite level by nature, we must, usually, content ourselves with trusting to planting, and the arrangement of walks, buildings, &c., to produce beauty and variety; and we would always in such cases, rather expend money in introducing beautiful vases, statues, or other works of positive artistic merit, than to terrace and unmake what character nature has stamped on the ground.

Positively ugly and forbidding surfaces of ground, may be rendered highly interesting and beautiful, only by changing their character, entirely, by planting. Such ground, after this has been done, becomes only the skeleton of the fair outside of beauty and verdure that covers the forbidding original. Some of the most picturesque ravines and rocky hill-sides, if stripped entirely of their foliage, would appear as ugly as they were before beautiful, and while this may teach the improver that there is no situation that may not be rendered attractive, if the soil will yield a growth of trees, shrubs and vines, it does not the less render it worth our attention in choosing or improving a place, to examine carefully beforehand, in what really consists the Beautiful in ground, and whether we shall lose or gain it in our proposed improvements.

Value of "Book Farming."

However much the men of ignorance or of antiquated notions, may berate the idea, there is no question but "book farming" puts more into the pockets of the thoughtful, industrious tiller of the soil. Progress is a prominent feature of "the world we live in." Every art, every science, and every calling, are making rapid strides along the path of Improvement. Thought itself receives an onward, accelerating impetus in the grand march, as is evidenced in the great discoveries of the age, and in the fact that now "bayonets think."

There cannot be found in any other calling so many who reject the printed knowledge which the press may send to their doors. The mechanic, the lawyer the physician, the merchant, &c., are eager to learn, from whatever source, all they can concerning their several employments—knowing that it is only in their intelligence they can keep pace with their fellow craftsmen.

Knowledge gives scope for thought, and thought strengthens and enlarges the judgement, making the mind vigorous and active in turning the circumstances that surround us to the very best advantage. Why then should the farmer hesitate to glean knowledge from the thinking press? If his neighbor tell him of a better way of cultivating his crop, he has the confidence to give it a trial. Why then should he scout the same thing in print, when by such means the good knowledge is borne to the homes of thousands? But, says our doubter, your "book farming" is conducted by your genteel farmers in kid gloves who, too delicate to dig and get practice can spin you very fine theories. Nay, friends, this is seldom the case; yet, if it were, have you not, dear sir, the good judgement to digest the truth, and take that only which is beneficial and adapted to your location and circumstances? Does our theoretical man detail some new process? Then don't go straightway and serve your whole crop to it; but if there seem to be a measure of reason in his arguments, give it a limited but fair trial. If it prove successful, acknowledge yourself, as you are, a great gainer. If it prove unsecessful you may be the gainer still, especially if you are the thoughtful man you should be. You may, perhaps, have evolved some new idea that in the end will not only richly reward yourself, but, if imparted to others, add to the general stock of knowledge. Then let none despise "book farming." But, as you would add dignity to the profession, and gold to your purse,—as you would increase the fertility of your soil, and gather knowledge for the mind—strive to be a thoughtful and diligent reader, and an active and critical thinker.

Mere speculation may, to some extent be beneficial. It is especially so where it opens the door to new fields of thought. So there is much need that he who writes, whether he speculate or detail facts, should be concise and simple, yet so full as to be clearely comprehended.

Rural New Yorker.] T. E. W.

Draining and Drain-Tile.

Editors Rural New Yorker:—The importance of thorough draining is doubtless much under estimated among our farmers, or it would come into more extensive practice. There are thousands of acres of land now nearly unavailable which might be reclaimed at once by this simple process, and made the most valuable of the farm. This fact has been demonstrated in hundreds of instances many of which might be cited were it advisable, but it is not necessary to bring proof of so plain a deduction of common sense.

The writer is cognizant of a single fact which, however, it may be proper to state. Near West Bloomfield village is a small farm, a part of which has long been noted for its hard and unaccommodating character. This farm was purchased by Mr. Bailey Ayres, some five years since, and soon after purchasing he broke up the particular portion of the premises refered to and fitted it as well as might be for wheat. As usual the crop was small and, on the unfortunate locality, but little more than the seed was returned.

Mr. Ayers immediately under-drained the whole lot putting down some 160 rods of Wilcox's drain tile, at a cost of about 56 cents per rod; and the result abundantly justified the expense. The hard blue clay became changed in character; a light, porous soil was seen in its stead, and a crop of wheat was harvested from this long condemned lot the very next year after the drainage, averaging 25 bushels to the acre. And the same lot is now equally trustworthy for corn, oats, or barley, and for grass it is one of the best in the whole town.

This ten acres of ground, under the old regime has, after much harrassing, yielded the husbandman perhaps equal to seven bushels of wheat per year per acre, which on an average has been worth $1 per bushel—bringing for the whole expenditure, labor included, $70.

To put down 160 rods of tile has cost say $90 The first year after the same or less labor on the same land, produced *two hundrd and fifty bushels of wheat*—i. e. 180 bushels *more* than the average for previous years,—which at $1 per bushel is just double pay for all the expense of drainage. We say nothing of subsequent crops, nor of the consequent enhanced value of the land drained. It is intrinsically worth at least double its former value, and will doubtless add $40 an acre to the market value of the whole farm. Purchasers do not turn from a lot of scabby sheep with more aversion than from a farm scabbed over with here and there a cold, blue, sorry-looking patch that resists all kindly nursing as well as the utmost violence for its reclamation. "Ah!" says the seller, "that spot is a little *'soured,'*—but it is small, and I don't try to do much with it." Yet it *does* much with him, not only in withholding due returns for his labor, but in advertising the purchaser to beware how he purchases.

Yet there is one good argument against under-drainage. It may be a kindness to many to be kept in blissful ignorance of losses which are now past remedy. Had the ten acres mentioned been properly cared for *fifty years ago*, they would yielded to the cultivator equivalent to more than 5000 bushels of wheat over the crops received previous to the experiment at draining. And what is true of this, is true of all similar localities. Give your land air and light and it will produce vegetation, good or bad. Give it stagnant water only, and you shall have plenty of frogs and tadpoles, and a" plentiful lack" of cereals and esculents; and your doctor's bill will likely enough elongate in proportion to the shortening of your purse, meanwhile.

But enough in this direction. As to the mode of drainage, much has been hitherto said in the agricultural papers. Many plans have been tried with more or less success. But as far as tested in this region, the burnt earthen tile has an undoubted preference over any other. Where these are used there is no danger of filling up—none from rats or mice or breakage; and little reason is seen why they may not be as perpetual as the farm itself. And because they require less spading—less to put them down,—and because of the value of stone for building fences and like purposes, the tile are undoubtedly the cheaper as well as better material procurable for this purpose.

Rural New Yorker.] OBSERVER.

What is Manure?

Any substance which restores the elements of fertility to the soil may be termed a manure, and in the language of Professor Norton, "may be divided into two classes—organic and inorganic; organic, when derived from the remains of organized beings, as plants and animals, inorganic, when produced from mineral kingdom. Vegetable differs much in its action from animal matter. Green vegetables, when deprived of vitality, rapidly decay; their great succulency promotes this when assisted by air, facilitated no dout by the azotised matters of the sap, which impart the putrefactive tendency, reducing the fibrous organism to carbonic acid, water, and ammonia; at the same time liberating its earthy and saline ingredients. Dry vegetables decay slowly—the sap being dried up is less inclined to putrefy; but how soon it commences when moistened or mixed with animal matters, as when straw is employed as litter! Peat is a manure in which decomposition is checked, not only by antiseptic matters, but chiefly by excessive moisture, and the consequent exclusion of air. Yet when dried and mixed with animal manures or caustic lime, how speedily it moulders down! The principal supply of vegetables for manure is derived from the leaves and stems of grain crops, grasses, the collection of weeds, the consumption of green crops, and, in some cases of the seeds of plants. Seeds of plants are directly used as manures, being too valuable as and article of food. Seeds contain the richest elements of fertilization—The phosphates and nitrogenous products; hence the rich manure obtained from cattle fed on oilcake or Linseed grain. The refuse of some seeds is used for manure, as brand rape-cake, malt-dust, &c. Green vegetables are sometimes used as a cheap method of fertilizing the soil either upon which they grow, or by removing them to another field. In this country, the principal green crop used for manure is clover. The waste of substances which would form valuable manure if saved and composted, upon many farms, and by saving, economical farmers, too, would make them open their eyes with astonishment if they could only see the truth. We have known many a careful, yea stingy New England farmer, who has all his life time snuffed the tainted air of the privy which has diffused its fertilizing gases abroad upon the air, instead of applying its substance as a manure upon his growing crops.

How many of you my readers, at this moment are complaining of short crops, and yet have piles of stable manure lying exposed to the bleaching effects of winter rain, or under the evaporating power of the scorching sun? How many of you have a barrel of ground plaster standing in your stable, with which you daily sprinkle the floor, and thus absorb the ammonia which is so offensive and would otherwise escape and be lost? That old greasy coat, hat, and boots, which I saw last week disfiguring the landscape near your house, where they have dangled as a scare-crow ever since last spring, would make more corn than they saved, if you had used them as a manure. For the purpose, we beg of you to save the blood and bristles of your butchering—it is a valuable manure.

Finally, bear in mind that almost every organic substance is capable of being converted into manure, and increasing the productions of the earth for the benefit of the whole human family.

The Plow.

An Experiment.

Mr. Editor,—I last season broke up a small piece—about one acre, of light poor, sward land, which had been so much exhausted by long cropping, as not to repay the expense of fencing and tillage by the crop, scanty and meagre, which it produced, when worked with the greatest care. It was plowed just as the grass was in blossom, rolled, harrowed thoroughly, and sowed in buckwheat, half a bushel to the acre. As soon as the grain commenced blossoming, the roller was taken on, and the crop rolled or laid for plowing in. This was performed with two horses, and the ground again rolled, harrowed, and suffered to remain till last spring, when it was limed lightly, ahd sowed with oats. The crop was remarkably fine, and much more vigorous than the same kind of grain, sowed about the time, on land considered much richer and in better heart.

The experiment will, by its result, go far to confirm the belief that old soils, which have become almost hopelessly and irremediably worn out, may, by this process, be rendered speedily productive. There are, probably, in this State, thousands and tens of thousands of acres of arable soil, which are annually becoming poorer, and which require the adoption of some process to secure them from utter sterility and ruin. By plowing in some green crop, say buckwheat clover, green corn or millet, and cropping judiciously for a few years, such lands will be vastly improved, in my opinion, and rendered fit for a course of culture which will secure ample profits to the owner, and without any very heavy outlay for labor or manure.

I trust that those of my farming friends who have adopted this practice of ameliorating their exhausted lands, or of enriching their crops, will not fail to publish their experience as it is a subject of vital consequence to the farmer and one on which we at present need a fuller and clearer light. In the hope of stimulating others, I have ventured the foregoing statement.

The above is from the Germantown Telegraph, and partakes of the usual excellence of that paper We would suggest in addition to the remarks made by the writer, that soils intended to be restored by the plowing in of green crops raised for that purpose, should be deeply plowed and sub-soiled before the planting of the green crop, and thus enable the root to travel to greater depth and furnish the inorganic constituents of the sub-soil to the plants, which in turn by their decay places them in the surface-soil. The deeply inserted roots of the green crop, decay in the sub-soil and return to it organic matter from the atmosphere, and thus the soil becomes deepened as well as improved in quantity.

In some localities the plowing in of green crops may be dispensed with when muck previously decompased by the salt and lime mixture, leaves from the woods, or other cheap organic substances can be procured, but in such pratice sub-soil plowing should be resorted to for a supply of the inorganic constituents, and the deepening of the soil.—ED. *Working Farmer.*

WHAT THE FARMER MOST NEEDS.

It is not a college, endowed by the State; it is primary schools to prepare farmers' sons and daughter for the higher walks in science as applied to agriculture. They need organization. They want farmers' clubs and neighborhood libraries of agricultural books. They need discussion. They need more intercourse, not only in their own town and county, but throughout the State and county, to see and learn what other farmers are doing, and if they have improvements, learn what they are, adopt them. This is the greatest need of the farmers. They need to become better satisfied with their vocation; to get rid of the prevailing notion that farming is, necessarily, an unmental employment; that is, that the farmer has no occasion to think—has no occasion for education and never can become wealthy, or what the world would call respectable, while engaged in the culture of the earth, and therefore he seeks the first opportunity to escape from an avocation placed under ban, not only by all others, but his own class also. The great need of the farmer is, that he shall declare himself independent of all other classes; at least more so than they are of him, and of course be entitled to as much honor and respect as those engaged in any other calling whatever; and if he is a man of toil that is no reason why he should not be a man of intellect. The great need of the farmer is organization, and this must be accomplished by a few self-sacrificing men, who will undertake the labor of establishing and maintaining farmers' clubs, in every neigborhood. Farmers need to drop politics and take up agriculture. They must talk, read and think and they will be sure to act; or their children will act for them.

STICK! STICK! STICK!

To get on in the world you must be content to be always stopping where you are; to advance you must keep down.—Following riches is like following wild geese; and you must crawl after them both on your belly, the moment you pop up your head, off they go, whistling in the wind, and you see no more of them. If you have no art of sticking by nature you must acquire it by art; put a couple of pounds of bird-lime upon your office stool, and sit down upon it; get a chain on your leg, and tie yourself to your counter like a pair of scissors nail yourself up against the wall of your place of business, like a weasel on a barn door or the sign of the spread eagle; or what would do best of all, marry an honest poor girl without a penny, and my life for yours if you don't do business. Never mind what your relations say about genius, talents, learning, pushing, enterprize, and such stuff; when they come advising you for your good, stick up to them for the loan of a sovereign, and if you ever see them on your side of the street again shiver me in welcome; but to do any good, I tell you over again, you must be a sticker. You may get fat upon a rock if you never quit your hold of it.—*Blackwood's Mag.*

Husbanding.—The green County Advocate is responsible for the following:

"The newspapers say that the school funds have been husbanded so well that every child in the Teritory will be provided for. This is nothing to take credit for:—they have husbanded every school mistress sent up there yet, and it is no more than fair that they should begin to provide for the children."